



City of Seattle

Greg Nickels, Mayor
Department of Design, Construction and Land Use
Diane Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND USE**

Application Number: 2302624
Applicant Name: Mark Wierenga
Address of Proposal: 13731 Northwood Road NW

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Master Use Permit for future construction of a 75-ft. long retaining wall and a 1,075 sq. ft. concrete patio accessory to an existing single family residence in an environmentally critical area.

The following approval is required:

SEPA – Environmental Determination (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05)

SEPA DETERMINATION: ☐ Exempt ☐ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS

 ☒ DNS with conditions

 ☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading,
 or demolition, or another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site and Area Description

This approximately 51,000 square foot irregularly shaped lot is in the middle of a group of large, heavily vegetated lots developed with single family residences. These are all zoned SF9600. The site too is developed with a single-family residence, attached garage, and rockeries and is densely vegetated with shrubs, trees, bushes and other typical residential landscaping. The site lies on a bit of a hilltop, with slopes dropping to the north and south. Portions of it are mapped steep slope environmentally critical areas.

Proposal Description

The applicant proposes to construct a substantial retaining wall to the west-southwest of the existing residence and to create some patio area more directly to the west, closer to the house. The project would include grading of approximately 127 cubic yards of cut and 233 cubic yards of fill material. The retaining wall would be constructed in the steep slope critical area; the patio

would not. The retaining wall would be about 10 feet high at the highest point. The site plan indicates that there would be a guardrail on top. The wall will be well outside any required yard.

Public Comments

The initial public comment period for the proposed project ended on 27 August 2003, and no comment letters were received.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the annotated environmental checklist prepared on 15 July 2003, and supplemental information in the project file submitted by the applicant. The information in the checklist, the supplemental information, and the experience of the lead agency with the review of similar projects forms the basis for this analysis and decision. Review is limited to issues pertinent to ECA impacts and mitigation.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, and certain neighborhood plans and other policies explicitly referenced, may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority. The Overview Policy states, in part, *"Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation"* subject to some limitations. Under such limitations or circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D) mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate. Short-term and long-term adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposal.

Short-term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: 1) temporary soil erosion and 2) increased vibration from construction operations and equipment. These impacts are not considered significant because they are temporary and/or minor in scope (SMC 25.05.794).

City codes and/or ordinances apply to the proposal and will provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: 1) Building Code (construction measures in general) and 2) Stormwater, Drainage and Grading Code (temporary soil erosion). Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation and further mitigation by imposing specific conditions is not necessary for these impacts. However, the proposal site is located in environmentally critical areas. Therefore, additional discussion of earth impacts is warranted.

Earth / Soils

The ECA Ordinance and Directors Rule (DR) 3-93 require submission of a soils report to evaluate the site conditions and provide recommendations for safe construction in areas with steep slopes, liquefaction zones, and/or a history of unstable soil conditions. Pursuant to this requirement the applicant submitted a geotechnical engineering studies prepared by The Galli Group and dated 10 February and 15 July 2003. The first report evaluates construction of a pipe pile retaining wall system. The second addresses a segmental retaining wall. Both reports have been reviewed by DCLU's geotechnical experts, who have concluded that the proposed

construction may proceed without undue risk to the property or to adjacent properties, and that the proposal complies with the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code. No additional conditioning is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

Other Short-term Impacts

The other short-term impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes, ordinances, or conditions (e.g., additional parking demand generated by construction personnel and equipment, increased use of energy and natural resources) are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation or discussion.

Long-term Impacts

Potential long-term impacts that may occur as a result of this project include increased surface water runoff from slightly greater site coverage by impervious surfaces. This long-term impact is not considered significant because the impacts are minor in scope.

The long-term impacts are typical of single-family development and will be mitigated by the City's adopted codes and/or ordinances. Specifically these are: Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code (storm water runoff from additional site coverage by impervious surface).

The other impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes or conditions are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by condition.

DECISION - SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

[X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

[] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

CONDITIONS - SEPA

None.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: September 8, 2003

Paul Janos, Land Use Planner

Department of Design, Construction and Land Use